

LETTER

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD PALMERSTON,

PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

ON THE

POLITICAL IMPRISONMENTS AND PRESENT CONDITION
OF NAPLES.


BY

JOHN AITON, D.D.,

MINISTER OF THE PARISH OF DOLPHINTON.

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MY LORD,

One of our most eminent British Statesmen, lately directed the attention of one of the most influential diplomatists in Europe to the diseased and degraded condition of the Neapolitan States. This dignified appeal, tenderly made, has produced no healing action in that body corporate. But, when Parliament meets, your Lordship will certainly be called upon officially to speak to these matters in the House of Commons.

When in Naples last summer, I learnt so much of the state of matters, and experienced so many of the political difficulties to which strangers are subjected, that the very day on which I reached London, and before I knew of Mr. GLADSTONE'S Letter to LORD ABERDEEN, I stated, from notes taken on the spot, the substance of what is now embraced in the following pages. I beg then, without your permission asked or given, to address this Letter to your Lordship, and to mention, that the facts being in corroboration of Mr. GLADSTONE'S Statement, only proves that truth is ever the same. Should this second blister contain a greater portion of flies than the former one did, let not the Neapolitans brand me as a Red Radical, trying to stir up mud in Italy. On the contrary, I have been born and bred a thorough Tory of the old school; and I hold a position in society which is generally the first to suffer in political convulsions. In a word, then, my object in writing this Letter, is to lend my feeble assistance in curing the evil by legislative enactment rather than by revolution.

I have the honour to be,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's obedient Servant,

JOHN AITON, D. D.

Minister of the Parish of Delphinton.

To the Right Honourable LORD PALMERSTON,
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,
LONDON.



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LETTER, &c.

“ Dining one day,” says Boswell, “ with General Paoli, and talking of his projected journey to Italy,” “ a man,” said Johnson, “ who has not been in Italy, is already conscious of an inferiority, from his not having seen what is expected a man should see.” Accordingly, my first peep of Italy called up a flood of gladness, and of classical recollections—

“ Jamque rubescebat stellis Aurora fugatis,
Quum procul obscuros colles humilemque videmus
Italiam. Italiam primus conclamat Achates
Italiam laeto socii clamore salutant.”

—When seen thus in the distance, Italy stands fair to view, even after the traveller has visited Athens, Constantinople, and the Plains of Troy. Its lonely islands, scattered along the coast in every variety of picturesque form, delight the eye of the passing voyager. The grandeur and novelty of its burning mountains fill the mind with sublime conceptions of the almighty Creator. The sky is still as cloudless as that of the Levant, but the sun is not quite so fierce, the wind not so burning, and the sultry heat of the atmosphere not so overpowering.—When approached near enough to be noticed in detail, the country looks extremely pretty in every variety of rural solitude and snugness. It often reminded me of the sunny scenes to be found in the lap of the Tyrolese Alps, or of the beautiful little spots which start up now and then in the Highlands of Scotland. Repose sleeps on its lovely shores. Its villages and villas charmed me into the natural belief, that every thing inward, in town and country, corresponded entirely with these fairy scenes. But I could not force myself altogether to forget the degraded position of its people, and the tyranny there exercised by popes, priests, kings, and rulers of every grade, all kept up by the state, and protected by military influence. I am a Tory of the old school, in every inch up to the stature of Lord Chancellor Eldon, and I bore all my conservative feelings in church and state at the foremain top, as we steamed onward to the Italian shore. Let not the reader mistake me then for a Radical, and suppose that I exaggerate in the few following pages. On the contrary, I was slow to believe, when told of the attributes of the Italian government; and when it was asserted on board the steamer, by an American consul, returning from China, that their proceedings in civil courts was a mockery of justice,—that the fearful sufferings inflicted in their prisons was a reality,—and that the government only existed for a time by shutting up the bulk and the best of its subjects in dungeons,—I at once resolved that I would rashly believe nothing that was told me, and that I would even be careful in narrating what I might see. I determined that my verdict should be given according to the evidence.

It should also be stated, that I had been for months on the shores of the Levant, without having received a letter from England, or even having seen an English newspaper. I therefore could know nothing of Mr. Gladstone's seasonable pamphlet. Even when I reached London, on my

way to Scotland, I was still ignorant of this production ; and there, I remarked, in a conversation which I had with a literary gentleman, that in Naples, the existing powers were screwing down their safety-valves so tightly, that they must soon burst the political boiler, and blow themselves into the air. But let us see how soon the startling facts of the case entirely turned the current of my thoughts, and absolutely disgusted me with the measures of extremity practised everywhere in Italy, on a people lively, intelligent, and not naturally given to revolution. And, in doing so, let me state, in guarded language, first, what came under my own observation, and the political difficulties I encountered merely as a stranger.

I have no intention of inflicting on my readers a trite and tame description of the Bay and City of Naples. It is more splendid even than the gulph in going up to Smyrna, and probably there is nothing on the face of the waters altogether more interesting. The islands of Capri, Ischia, and others no less pleasing to the fancy, are presented to the left. The Castle-a-marre to the right, Vesuvius, the harbour, and town in front, and, in fact, the whole coast around present a picturesque and finished panorama. But, alas ! I was soon convinced that these beautiful islands were but so many excavated caverns, where thousands of miserable victims are rotting out a dreadful existence under the earth and ocean. These vineyards, hamlets, and valleys on the mainland, are but the fair canopy which covers and conceals a mass of human suffering, more tragical than all the annals of the ancient tyrannies. These verdant hills of fruit and flower, are but the swelling domes of dungeons, dark and deep, and the scenes of sufferings, more harrowing in their details than the genius of Shakespeare ever painted. And those who pass along these gay and gorgeous streets, are walking over living tombs, in which thousands of helpless and hopeless beings groan in irons, chained together in pairs.—But let us take special facts.

In a minute after the well known rattle of the chain anchor had ceased, the curtain began to rise, and gradually to disclose the realities of the case. Forthwith a strong posse of police-officers jumped on board the steamer, to inspect the passengers. We were ranked on the deck for the purpose, and counted off like sheep, then we were compared as to age, face, and figure, with the descriptions given in our passports. The chief men of these police-officers next held a private conversation with one another, and with the captain—then they gave instructions to the rest of the party, and went on shore, leaving the remainder as a guard, to prevent any of the passengers from quitting the ship. In two or three hours after this, a police officer returned, and handed out to every one of the passengers, against whom there was no existing suspicion, a permit for landing. Down we all jumped into the many boats which were alongside of the ship, when the order was given to take us direct to the maritime police, which may be said almost to stand on a rock in the sea. Here the passengers, on landing, were marched into a large room to be inspected a second time, and minutely examined as to where they had been, where they meant to go, how long they were to remain in Naples, and on what errand they came to their country. Having also passed this ordeal without suspicion, I was called on to ticket my residence, and told that I would not be allowed to leave the office till I did so. The passengers were next conducted to the custom-house, where their luggage was in-

spected in a very cursory manner, but where their books and letters and papers were examined very strictly,—here the authorities were somewhat puzzled with some of my slips of paper, which were written in the languages of Arabia, Turkey, and Greece. But at last I was relieved, and permitted to drive off to my hotel. Here, again, on my arrival I was ordered to register myself in every particular, as before, and I was told that this description would forthwith be lodged in the general police-office for the city and interior of the kingdom. Thinking now that all this was surely more than enough, I ordered a bath, and was enjoying it, when I was startled by a knock at the door by another policeman, sent to inquire still more minutely. This personage was told to wait till I found it convenient to put on my clothes, when he would be received with all courtesy ; but he went off rather surprised and indignant at my assurance. Having issued out of the bath and bed-room, and sat down to breakfast, two police-officers, apparently of a higher caste, called, and inquired why I dismissed the former emissary in the daring way I had ventured to do. —I stated the facts in vindication, and when these did not seem to be satisfactory, I threatened to eat my breakfast in silence, unless they became remarkably civil. The landlord interfered, and the peace was maintained between us. These officials were dismissed little more than half-satisfied. I sallied forth to see the lions, when the hint was given to me by a waiter, that my footsteps would be traced by government spies, called inspectors, and every word I spoke would be ascertained and reported at head-quarters. Having nothing to fear in all this, I walked out to the street, and there noticed that the cabman, who had brought me from the custom-house to the hotel, was already under examination as to all I had said and done, since I landed two hours before. When sauntering along the streets, a man accosted me in English, asked for news from home, and seemed desirous to point out any thing worth seeing. But by and by he began to talk more generally, then he complained of the constituted authorities, and seemed to be pumping up all my sentiments on these subjects. Here, had I not been upon my guard, and probably, whether I was upon my guard or not, the conversation was taken down, and reported at the head quarters ; and it was easy to see that, in this way, simpletons would often be caught in the trap.—When the hour for dining approached, I sat down at *une Table d'Hôte bien servie*, when I found at my elbow an intelligent gentleman, who spoke English fluently. He was so remarkably obliging, that my suspicions were excited that he might have an object. He was very delicate and dexterous in trying to draw out my sentiments, but in three minutes I was convinced that he was another government inspector, therefore, when he made his observations, I was not contented merely with being silent, but took care to contradict him, lest he should turn the cat in the pan, and report what he said as if it had been uttered by myself. And thus, from day to day, my steps were traced, and my every idle word recorded, in going out to Herculæum, or Vesuvius, or Pompeii, or anywhere else ; or at the railway station, or at the harbour, or in a cab, or in walking along the street or by the wayside.

Having seen everything, by night and by day, at Naples, and walked out to Virgil's Grotto, and Cicero's Villa, and over the Elysian fields, and up to the crater of one of the burning mounts, I at last began to

think of leaving for Rome. It was my intention to have gone leisurely by land, merely to see the country, and to rest for a day or so at Gæta, and some of the principal stations. I judged it prudent, therefore, to adjust my passport for leaving, and also to make inquiries as to the starting of conveyances. These ascertained, I found that I had two days on hand, and nothing material to do but to procure my passport, and pay my bill at the hotel. Resolving to take time by the forelock, I called a cab, and drove to the interior police for my passport,—there I was told to go to the maritime office, and when I went to it, I was told to go back to the office from whence I came; where, at last, I found the object of my search. Everything being right, and with my passport in hand, I naturally thought that a very few minutes would finish the transaction, but in this I was much mistaken. I was turned from one office to another, my description was recorded in one large book after another, and a dollar was charged by this and by that official; and when at last I expected that all was finished,—and well might I expect it, because I had trotted for four hours, up stairs and down stairs, and round corners, and into nine or ten different apartments,—I was coolly told to come back at four o'clock, when I would receive my passport. I accordingly returned at the hour appointed, but the premises were shut up, and some person told me to come back next morning soon after ten o'clock. I did so, but, lo! it was one of their numerous saint's days, and so there was no help for it but to call again the day after, and in this way I lost my conveyance, which was to take me to Rome by land. After all this running and disappointment, I went to the office rather out of temper, telling the authorities that I would request, as I required, an interview with my ambassador on the subject of my passport. This intimation produced only a contemptuous sneer, and some insulting remark from one of the young officials, which I answered by actually clenching my fist, stretching out my arm, and threatening to punish the offender on the spot. To my surprise, I was politely requested to be seated, and assured that my passport would be forthcoming *seculo e momento*, and in fifteen minutes it was in my pocket. Then I hurried back to my hotel, paid my bill, got into a cab, and drove off to the harbour at a canter, and found myself no more than in time for the steamer sailing to Civita Vecchia; whereas I had meant to have travelled by land, had I got my passport in any reasonable time.

I was snug on board, and, of course, right glad to be relieved from such pitiful annoyances. The steam was up, and the hour for starting just at hand, when all the passengers were mustered rank and file on the quarter deck, the list of their names was called over, their passports and persons were inspected, and they were counted and compared, and allowed to sail, or taken on shore again, at the will and pleasure of two policemen, who are sent there in every case for the purpose. Thank God, I was permitted to remain on board, and now the anchor was heaved, and we all moved, fully resolved never to trust ourselves in such hands again.

Another fact requires to be stated, in itself it is apparently trifling, but, in my situation, it indicated a trap into which I might have fallen, and against the danger of which, travellers to Naples should be warned. I found myself in a position in which it was impossible to tell when I might be permitted to leave, and I wrote home to my friend, the minister of the

contiguous parish of Newlands, requesting him to perform for me my duty at a neighbouring sacrament on a certain day, in the event of my being detained. I stated in this letter, that no sooner had I escaped the delays caused in the East by quarantines, than I was involved in Italy with political obstructions, far less reasonable, and perhaps of longer duration, than a five days' imprisonment in a Turkish lazaretto. I have sufficient reason to believe that this letter, which I posted with my own hands, was intercepted, opened, and laid before the prefect of the police, or the minister of the interior, for the purpose of creating a charge, if possible, against me. And of all the letters written from Suez, Grand Cairo, Damietta, Jaffa, Jerusalem, Smyrna, and Athens, the one from Naples alone never reached its destination,—fortunately I was cautious in what I wrote, it having occurred to me that the letter would certainly be opened at the post-office in Naples, and produced against me. Nay, I even hesitated whether it was safe to trust such a crew with a specimen of my penmanship, lest the writers they employ for the purpose might, by imitating my hand-writing, forge grounds of accusation against me.

Here, however, it is but fair to mention, that I suffered no annoyance from the Pope's Nuncio at Naples—on the contrary, at my first call, every thing was adjusted in ten minutes, and the Secretary, shaking my hand, politely wished me a good voyage, and a safe return to England—knowing all the while, from my passport, my profession to be that of a protestant clergyman.

I spoke of my difficulties to an English gentleman on his travels, and he told me how severely he had suffered too in Naples. He said he had actually been dragged by the police from his seat in the railway train, when setting out for Pompeii, but for what reason he could not conceive, unless it was from senseless suspicion and fear. He added, that it was, in all the circumstances, somewhat remarkable that I was not detained, or more severely handled, because I had just come from Malta, the great retreat of Neapolitan refugees, who were constantly sending out emissaries. And more unfortunate still, I happened to have a long white beard of four months growth, which was well known to be the badge of the liberal Philosophers, or Red Radicals as they are called. But he assured me that my beard would be quite acceptable both at Rome and Florence.

Facts were every day made manifest to me, from sources the most respectable, that matters are in a most deplorable state in Naples—worse than ever they were in France, previous to the breaking out of the first revolution—and worse even than they are at this time in Rome. To make out this general statement, no man need go with a flambeau through the darkness and dirt of their dungeons, he need only walk the street at noon day, and take the first six men he may meet at random, and ascertain what sort of characters they are. The first is obviously a priest or a jesuit, and the people are kissing his hands, and the hems of his long black garments, as he stalks stately along. The second is a soldier in glittering regimentals, starched and stiff as a poker. The third is a spy, *alias* an inspector dressed in disguise. The fourth is a public robber by profession, who is not only armed to the teeth, but dressed in the well known livery of his own order. The fifth is one of the police; and the sixth belongs to the lazzaroni. And thus there is not an honest, in-

dustrious, or independent member of society among them. The virtuous, the intelligent, and the more refined portion of the community, have been hanged or shot ; they have fled, or they are banished, or they are groaning under your feet, chained together two by two, to the number of thousands. Many thousand peaceable citizens are certainly still to be found, but Naples has been sadly widowed of her best husbands, and is mainly in the thrall of scoundrels. There is not a family which does not reckon among its members one or two prisoners, one or more sons, wandering in exile. The single kindred of Plutino, in the province of Reggio in Calabria, counts 62 of the individuals composing it imprisoned. The natural weakness of women is no defence against persecution. Every independent honest man is held in detestation. In the wretched provinces the sufferings of the inhabitants far exceed those of the capital. In every city, in every parish, there is an inspector who informs. Every police myrmidon is an absolute sovereign. Every captain of gendarmerie is a despot. Every judge is a Navarro. The kingdom of Naples is a vast dungeon, and the arbiters of its destinies are perjury and the inquisition into thoughts and consciences. Its law is delation. The tortures of soul and body are not enough—the extortion of man's substance is added. The Government is not contented with being goaler, inquisitor, and executioner, it wishes to wear a perfect crown of infamy, and to become a robber to sequesterate private property.

In regard to the King, two parties speak to the facts, probably according to their own sentiments, as their statements are somewhat at variance. The one says that his Majesty is neither more nor less than a brute and a bigot. These assert that he is little more than half responsible for the consequences of those diabolical deeds. Facile and stubborn by turns, and each always when he should be the other, he is guided and goaded on to every outrage. By others he is said to be pious, and naturally benevolent, and these argue that he is ignorant of many of the transactions in hand, and that he disapproves of others on the score of humanity. His friends also argue that the number and variety of the cases are so vast, that no man of his intellect and habits could master the details of one in a thousand of the accused. All admit that his intellect is confined to a darker and narrower capacity within his own cranium, than his victims are in their dungeons, and that all his conceptions are more cramped than such whose limbs are bound in the stocks, or locked in handcuffs. He presides in a cabinet of ministers, who are cold, cunning, and cruel. All of these sit as with their own neck in the noose of a halter. In their turn every man of them has played the tyrant, and of course they are cowards at the heart; suspicious of one another, their whole aim is to work the ruin of a rival; and forgery, bribery, perjury, intrigue, and the stiletto are the instruments they employ. This cabinet is controlled by a more dangerous council still—the clergy; so that the acts apparently done by Ferdinand and approved by his ministers, are but the dogmas of Liguori applied to the science of government. Thus priest-craft and popery are at the root of the whole evil. The jesuits dig the dungeons, drug the eup, and poison the stiletto. Worse even than all this, the priests give dispensations for as much forgery, perjury, bribery, intrigue, and assassination, as circumstances may require; and all this, no doubt, for the glory of God, for

the security of the church, and for the salvation of souls. And worse still, if worse can be, they draw facts from the mouths of their penitents, and then betray the secrets of the confessional to the state. Rome, therefore, is to be held accountable at the bar of human and divine justice for all this iniquity. It is to maintain their own infallibilities, their purgatories, their transubstantiations, their revenues, and their revenge, that they thus heap up more and more victims every month in the year. True these men are chained in couples by the hands of a tyrannical state, but it is no less true that this state is moved forward by a still more tyrannical church. Rome slyly slinks from observation, and of course screens herself behind her puppets, a bigotted monarch, an ambitious ministry, and an unprincipled pack of judges. Rome generally conceals herself well, but at times, and when the prey is within reach, the powerful and polluted paw of the beast is stretched forth with its claws uncovered. But in all such cases there are many misdeeds, which are observed only by the all-seeing eye of God above, who, in the meantime, merely holds his offenders in derision, that He may afterwards speak to them in wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. But, depend upon it, that when the time and times are fulfilled, the bared arm of the Omnipotent shall strike, and that the Pope and his popery shall fall, like Lucifer, never to rise.

No set of public men were ever before infected with so much dangerous delirium. It can only be accounted for on the old maxim, *Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat*. Mr. Gladstone says, that the general belief is, that prisoners for political offences in the Two Sicilies, are between 15,000 or 20,000 or 30,000, mostly belonging to the middle classes—those on whom the solidity of the nation mainly depends. The official reply of the Neapolitan government to Mr. Gladstone's pamphlet, sums up its contradiction of his statistics, by stating that the number of political prisoners is no more than 2024. The Neapolitan correspondent of the Daily News declares this to be positive fraud, and he supplies the number of political prisoners, as extracted from the police registers from May 1848 to September 1851.

Number of Neapolitan Political Prisoners from May 1848 to September 1851.

Condemned to the Ergastolo	.	.	.	36
Condemned in irons to the Bagni	.	.	.	1000
Condemned in irons to the Bagni, but not yet removed from prison	.	.	.	300
Banished to the Islands after trial	.	.	.	800
Banished to the Islands without trial, including the Soldiers sent by Royal authority to the camp of Charles Albert	.	.	.	6,000
Accused, who have been or still are in Prison, from May 1848 to September 1851, not included in the above	.	.	.	15,000
Supposed number of Exiles	.	.	3,000	
Hiding from the Police	.	.	150	
Exiled from their native towns, but still in the Kingdom	.	.	350	3,500
Total number of victims of the Neapolitan Constitution				26,636

The information I got, without knowing anything of Mr. Gladstone's pamphlet, stated the number to be enormously great, and about 50,000, but I made allowances at the time for the many who magnify, and who delight to speak in round numbers. I was told that astonishing crowds are confined in particular prisons, and that the number of individuals missing from among the community was very great in particular localities. In Naples alone, some hundreds are under indictment at a time. The number of refugees, or persons variously concealed, were said to be much larger than that of the prisoners. And nearly all who formed the opposition in the Chamber of Deputies under the constitution, are in prison, or in exile, or in eternity. Five hundred are often tried at a time. Such is the present state of society, that any ill disposed person can go before the police, and denounce his neighbour as an enemy to the government, and hundreds are in prison on such charges, neither knowing by whom they are accused, or for what. In the provinces this licence is still more abused, and so terrific is the action of the police, that no one will venture to say a word on any public question, lest they should bring themselves within the grasp of the law. The personal histories of the victims who are thus juridically assassinated, are given in detail by M. Massari, and they include the young and the enthusiastic supporter of constitutional royalty, the helpless patriot of ninety years of age, the gentleman, the scholar, and even the liberal and enlightened priest. Two classes alone enjoy a temporary relief from persecution:—those who consent to be the instruments of oppression, and the rabble who are below its reach.

The Neapolitan Government, in their official reply to Mr. Gladstone's Pamphlet, seem to be at great pains to contradict him in minor details, and they limit the number of their victims, as has already been stated, to 2024. But it is a mere matter of moonshine how many thousand victims there may be. The principle brought out is the great point to be attended to. When this is once established on a broad basis, the details are of less consequence, and the numbers are nothing. The number, therefore, admitted by the Neapolitan State is fatal to their own defence. Nay, it is of no great importance even, the real or constructive guilt of individuals, for instance, even of Poerio and his associates. The questions to be asked are, Whether the punishments be disproportioned to the offences? Are the accused detained longer in prison before trial in Naples than in any other state in Europe? Does a period of one, two, or even three years, often intervene between the alleged crime and the accusation? Are there any means of forcing on a trial within any given time? Have the Neapolitans any thing like our Habeas Corpus Act? Are persons sometimes detained in prison, after having been unanimously acquitted by the judges? If a very few cases indeed of such tyranny can be made out against this State it is fatal, and their defence is flimsy, because, if the constitution has been violated, it may be violated again, and if the law has once bended to political purposes, it may be bended again and again in like manner. The admission of two thousand such cases by the friends of the State, is far more, therefore, than sufficient to condemn it. As was said of old by Abraham regarding Sodom, "If peradventure there be fifty within the city, or if peradventure there lack five of the fifty, or if there shall be forty found there, or thirty or twenty, or peradventure on-

ly ten shall be found there." Wrangling as to numbers, therefore, is out of the question.

There is said to be a triple union—the Government, the Clergy, and the Robbers, who are counted not by thousands but by tens of thousands. These robbers are not only permitted by the State, but they are protected, patronized, employed and paid. They care for neither politics nor parties, religion or priest. Plunder is their profession and practice. In late outbreaks, when the fighting was at the hardest, when the troops were nearly overpowered, and when the Council of Tyrants were in jeopardy of having their throats cut, the seasonable idea was suggested by the priests that the robbers should be let loose upon the town, to plunder the premises of the citizens. Ten or twelve thousand of these set to work, so that the inhabitants were compelled to retire, and fight for their families and firesides. In one hour this turned the scale, and the reign of terror was resumed, with terrors ten times more terrible than before. Now all is rancour and revenge, and a fell struggle between life and death. The prime minister acts on the old principle, that if he do not impeach and imprison the late prime minister Poero, this said Poero may come back into office, and impeach and imprison him. In like manner the judges, who are poor, ill paid, and removable at will, know and act upon the knowledge that they will be turned out of office if they do not condemn those brought by the State to their bar. A worse than Jefferies presides over this tribunal, in the person of Novarro—he is said to be cunning, cowardly, and the creature of the court, more than the infamous minion of Charles II. He is said to be the type and model of a magistrate after the heart of the present rulers of Naples. Once at his bar, whether innocent or guilty, the fate of the accused is nearly the same. His maxim is,—hang the red republican when he is young, and he will cease to be a red republican when he is grown old. This court is the recipient of the vilest and clumsiest forgeries, got up wilfully by the advisers of the crown, for the purpose of destroying the property, freedom, and life of the community. Evidence too, is often extracted from the accused by the most savage and cowardly system of mental torture.

Perjury may be bought in Naples for a penny, and many have no other visible means of subsistence than that of swearing to the truth of falsehood as the questions are asked. To them the terms for trial are just so many golden harvests. The witnesses know how to manage their sins of perjury in the slump for a trifle at the Confessional. The stiletto too is very cheap at Naples, and does a vast deal of quiet work. The robbers know, and act on the belief, that if they do not stretch forth their arm at a time, their order would be put down, as ceasing to be useful. The church thinks that every thing is safe, and that the people will be kept quiet under the heaviest oppression, by military despotism, by reviews and sham fights, and by amusements of every variety and endless duration ; such as illuminations, fireworks, theatres, operas, and, above all, plenty of music, to drown, as if in a battle-field, the cries of the wounded.

Thus the whole Neapolitan community is diseased and degraded more than it was in ancient Rome, under the monster Nero, or than it was in Constantinople, when the head of even the most favoured prime minister

was found, on striking the average of many cases, to be worth only three years' purchase.

The grand question, therefore, comes to be, whether any thing like this should be suffered to exist in the centre and garden of modern Europe? Civilized nations do not permit cruelty to animals of any kind. By every law, human and divine, men are hanged every where for the murder of their fellow. Squadrons are stationed on the African coast, and the law of nations does not prevent the English from firing into the ships of the man-stealer. All nations sympathize in the fate of Sir John Franklin, and of those who are frozen up, probably in death, in the far north. Many ships have sailed for the purpose of sending them relief; and were these navigators found to be imprisoned by savages in the Polar regions, would the crew of any one nation hesitate to fight for their rescue? Was there not an expedition sent out to Africa from England to punish one of the savages there for his cruelties, and to relieve from slavery the victim of his tyranny. Did not Mahomedan Turkey give refuge to the men who fled after the late revolutions in Germany for protection, and that even at the risk of being involved in war with more than the half of the civilized world? And is there not a similar question now at issue between the humanity of civilization and this Neapolitan government? Is their cruelty not merely to animals but to fellow-men, to be permitted? Is their worse than African slavery to be longer endured? Is no sympathy to be extended to men imprisoned by the thousand? Is the general humanity which constitutes the majesty of the law of nations no longer to be respected? Are the Mahomedan Turks to take the precedence of Christians in European civilization? Is Ferdinand not as guilty as the Dey of Algiers ever was? And if, in spite of every friendly remonstrance, he continues to be so, ought he not to receive a similar punishment?

It is no answer to these questions to say, that one nation has not the right to interfere with another, in the internal management of their own affairs. Granted. No man has the right to interfere with a school-master, for instance, while he merely handles the taws in his chastisement. But, if the punishment amount to maiming or murdering, others may force an entrance into the premises, to protect. As in the social so certainly in the political community—non-interference is the rule, but interference is the exception, and every rule has its exception.

It is nonsense, in such a case as this, to talk of the majesty of public opinion working any change worth while, or in any reasonable time. It is vain, and it would be cruel to wait the issue of another outbreak, in the hope that it may work a cure. The truth is, Ferdinand expects, and is prepared for another effort being made, during the year 1852, in the Two Sicilies; and it is understood that, in the event of such taking place, the Austrian troops will advance into the Abbruzzi. Mr. Gladstone's Letter has been published for months, onwards through many editions. Private remonstrances have been used in influential quarters. The effect of public opinion, or rather of European indignation, denouncing Ferdinand as an enemy to the monarchy, has been tried. The Great Powers have been applied to, and all to no purpose. Against all this the Lord has hardened the heart of Ferdinand as he did that of Pharaoh of old, and he is also blinding the nations. Mr. Gladstone's Pamphlet has been

transmitted to these nations, it is said, through our Ambassadors. Some of these Great Powers have taken no notice of the circumstances. Others have returned a saucy and senseless reply, or rather reproach. Thus it is that there is an under current every where throughout Europe, and the Jesuits are as busy as the Devil is said to be in a gale of wind. Louis Napoleon totters in his seat. The Prussians seem to be becoming more popish in their policy. Russia controls not only Austria and the German States, but may soon interfere in France. America is distant. England alone is able, and should be willing, therefore, to act in this matter. But, as yet, England has been timid and tender. And in this way thousands of fellow men are permitted to be loaded with chains, and left to rot in death, without pity or preservation. These miserable victims of this fearful despotism have hitherto been placed beyond the reach of human sympathy, and it is quite apparent that the authors of this tyranny are beyond the reach of advice, remonstrance, or threatening. Any power, therefore, applied after any ordinary rule, will certainly fail. In these circumstances, it will not do to leave such incessant and deliberate violations of the law of nations even to the slow and ever sure retribution of Divine Providence. The outrage upon liberty and religion is wholesale, and should be handled in a very summary manner indeed.

For the sake then of humanity and even decency, let the Five Great Powers, aided by America, at once send a squadron up the Gulf of Naples. Should these Great Powers hesitate to concur, and hesitate they certainly will, let England and America act. And if America hesitates, let England, unaided and alone, send another Lord Exmouth to bombard another Dey of Algiers, for three hours and a half by the Shrewsbury clock. Seriously speaking, were the English squadron only to steer its course in the offing at Naples, such would be taken as a genteel hint that Britain meant to interfere, and matters might be quietly amended, and this is all that is wanted. Again, should your Lordship and the ministry hesitate to adopt so bold a step, on the score of non-interference in the internal affairs of an independent state, let public meetings be called throughout the length and breadth of our land; let rattling speeches be made, and peremptory petitions sent up to strengthen the hands of our legislators, that the House of Commons may give tongue, and that the Peers may not be silent. Above all, let Whig, Tory, and Radical all agree for once at least. Nay, good feeling and even policy should induce the Tories to take the lead in a matter of this sort so barbarous. They never were behind in humanity, and here there is an opportunity of showing, that when a case of real and universal oppression has been made out, they are the first to take it up. Besides, Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston, may naturally feel a delicacy—although they should not,—and at any rate their measures, unsupported by all parties, might be less influential in the estimation of Russia and Austria, than when they are driven forward by public opinion.

Should, however, every thing fail, and no movement at all be made on the part of England, time will prove that Ferdinand is working the work of the Jacobins, although he knows it not, and will not believe it when told. Yes, Ferdinand is a destructive and communist of the first and fiercest grade. The monarchy is cutting its own throat at Naples. There absolutism will overwhelm the government as with an avalanche. All the machinery of Ferdinand's ministers, priests, judges, gaolers, and exe-

cutioners, will precipitate Naples on red republicanism faster and surer than any thing else. The Allied armies managed, in the long run, to subvert the military genius of Bonaparte, and to place the Bourbons once more on the throne of France ; but no power upon earth could maintain them in that position, solely or mainly at least, because these Bourbons did not learn wisdom in adversity, and because they persisted, in spite of many warnings, it is said, from the Duke of Wellington, to be guided behind the screen by priests, and more especially by an old dotard who had shared and consoled their afflictions when they were in exile. In the same way, at Naples, one outbreak after another may be put down, but all the while matters will continue to grow white unto the harvest ; and the time will come when all the disposable forces of Russia, sent to suppress revolt, will fail in effecting the purpose, and Naples, and the Neapolitans, shall yet be free. In the meantime, England expects that Lord Palmerston will do his duty in this matter, and step forward without delay, in a decisive manner, and fearless of the consequences. •

One word more, let Ferdinand and his ministers be wise in time, and all will be well with them and their people, and English Tories will certainly be the very last men in the world to interfere with their policy.

Preparing for the Press,

THE

LANDS OF THE MESSIAH, MAHOMET, AND THE POPE,

AS VISITED IN 1851.

BY JOHN AITON, D.D.

